

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Currently amended) A surgical instrument for accessing and illuminating a space within a body of a patient, comprising:

a retractor positionable with the body of the patient and including an inner wall surface defining a working channel therealong; and

a lighting element including at least one wall member and at least one light transmitting element along said at least one wall member, said at least one wall member being deformable to assume any one of a number of configurations for positioning of the wall member in the working channel such that the wall member bendable and resilient so that when bent and positioned along said inner wall surface said at least one wall member returns toward said pre-bent configuration and frictionally engages said inner wall surface, said frictional engagement sufficient to maintain a position of said lighting element relative to said retractor after said lighting element is moved while frictionally engaging said inner surface to said position, wherein said retractor is a tube with the inner wall surface of said tube defining said working channel, and said at least one wall member of said lighting element extends around more than 50 percent of said inner wall surface of said tube.

2. (Original) The instrument of claim 1, wherein said at least one light transmitting element includes a plurality of light transmitting elements extending along and spaced about said at least one wall member.

3. (Original) The instrument of claim 2, wherein said at least one wall member includes an inner wall member and an outer wall member, said plurality of light transmitting elements being positioned in a passage between said inner wall member and said outer wall member.

4. (Original) The instrument of claim 2, wherein said plurality of light transmitting elements comprise optical fibers.

5. (Original) The instrument of claim 1, wherein said at least one wall member is bendable to conform to said inner wall surface.

Claim 6 (Cancelled)

7. (Original) The instrument of claim 1, wherein said lighting element is movable axially along said inner wall surface while said at least one wall member maintains frictional engagement therewith.
8. (Original) The instrument of claim 1, wherein said lighting element is movable circumferentially along said inner wall surface while said at least one wall member maintains frictional engagement therewith.
9. (Previously presented) The instrument of claim 1, wherein said at least one wall member includes a first wall member including a convexly curved surface positionable along said inner wall surface of said retractor and a second wall member including a concavely curved wall surface opposite said convexly curved wall surface, wherein said concavely curved wall surface is exposed to said working channel.
10. (Original) The instrument of claim 9, wherein said first and second wall members extend between opposite lateral edges.
11. (Original) The instrument of claim 10, wherein said first and second wall members are coupled to one another along said opposite lateral edges.
12. (Original) The instrument of claim 10, wherein said first and second wall members extend along more than 50 percent of said inner wall surface between said opposite lateral edges.
13. (Original) The instrument of claim 10, wherein said first and second wall members are comprised of opaque material.
14. (Original) The instrument of claim 9, wherein said concavely curved wall surface forms

a passage that parallels said working channel.

Claim 15 (Cancelled)

16. (Currently amended) A surgical instrument for accessing and illuminating a space within a body of a patient, comprising:

a retractor positionable with the body of the patient and including an inner wall surface defining a working channel therealong; and

a lighting element including at least one wall member and at least one light transmitting element along said at least one wall member, said at least one wall member being bendable to conform with said inner wall surface and resilient to normally return toward a pre-bent configuration to frictionally engage said inner wall surface when said lighting element is positioned against said inner wall surface, said frictional engagement sufficient to maintain a position of said lighting element relative to said retractor after said lighting element is moved while frictionally engaging said inner surface to said position, wherein said retractor is a tube with the inner wall surface of said tube defining said working channel, and said at least one wall member of said lighting element extends around more than 50 percent of said inner wall surface of said tube.

17. (Original) The instrument of claim 16, wherein said at least one light transmitting element includes a plurality of light transmitting elements extending along and spaced about said at least one wall member.

18. (Original) The instrument of claim 17, wherein said at least one wall member includes an inner wall member and an outer wall member, said plurality of light transmitting elements being positioned in a passage between said inner wall member and said outer wall member.

Claim 19 (Cancelled)

20. (Original) The instrument of claim 16, wherein said lighting element is movable axially

along said inner wall surface while said at least one wall member maintains frictional engagement therewith.

21. (Original) The instrument of claim 16, wherein said lighting element is movable circumferentially along said inner wall surface while said at least one wall member maintains frictional engagement therewith.

22. (Previously presented) The instrument of claim 16, wherein said at least one wall member includes a first wall member including a convexly curved surface positionable along said inner wall surface of said retractor and a second wall member including a concavely curved wall surface opposite said convexly curved wall surface, wherein said concavely curved wall surface is exposed to said working channel.

23. (Original) The instrument of claim 22, wherein said first and second wall members extend between opposite lateral edges.

24. (Original) The instrument of claim 23, wherein said first and second wall members extend along more than 50 percent of said inner wall surface between said opposite lateral edges.

Claim 25 (Cancelled)

26. (Currently amended) A surgical instrument for accessing and illuminating a space within a body of a patient, comprising:

a retractor positionable with the body of the patient and including an inner wall surface defining a working channel therealong; and

a lighting element including at least one wall member and at least one light transmitting element along said at least one wall member, said at least one wall member being deformable from a first configuration to conform with said inner wall surface and configured to normally return toward said first configuration to frictionally engage said inner wall surface, wherein said lighting element is movable axially along said inner wall surface of said retractor for

repositioning said lighting element in said working channel while maintaining frictional engagement with said inner wall surface, wherein said retractor is a tube with the inner wall surface of said tube defining said working channel, and said at least one wall member of said lighting element extends around more than 50 percent of said inner wall surface of said tube.

27. (Original) The instrument of claim 26, wherein said at least one light transmitting element includes a plurality of light transmitting elements extending along and spaced about said at least one wall member.

28. (Original) The instrument of claim 27, wherein said at least one wall member includes an inner wall member and an outer wall member, said plurality of light transmitting elements being positioned in a passage between said inner wall member and said outer wall member.

Claims 29-30 (Cancelled)

31. (Original) The instrument of claim 26, wherein said lighting element is movable circumferentially along said inner wall surface while said at least one wall member maintains frictional engagement therewith.

32. (Previously presented) The instrument of claim 26, wherein said at least one wall member includes a first wall member including a convexly curved surface positionable along said inner wall surface of said retractor and a second wall member including a concavely curved wall surface opposite said convexly curved wall surface, wherein said concavely curved wall surface is exposed to said working channel.

33. (Original) The instrument of claim 32, wherein said first and second wall members extend between opposite lateral edges.

34. (Original) The instrument of claim 33, wherein said first and second wall members extend along more than 50 percent of said inner wall surface between said opposite lateral edges.

Claims 35-55 (Cancelled)

56. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument of claim 1, wherein said at least one wall member includes a pair of wall members forming a passage therebetween and said at least one light transmitting element is positioned in said passage, said passage opening at distal and proximal ends of said pair of wall members and said pair of wall members extend between opposite lateral edges of said pair of wall members, said pair of wall members being coupled to one another along said opposite lateral edges.

57. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument of claim 16, wherein said at least one wall member includes a pair of wall members forming a passage therebetween and said at least one light transmitting element is positioned in said passage, said passage opening at distal and proximal ends of said pair of wall members and said pair of wall members extend between opposite lateral edges of said pair of wall members, said pair of wall members being coupled to one another along said opposite lateral edges.

58. (Previously presented) The surgical instrument of claim 26, wherein said at least one wall member includes a pair of wall members forming a passage therebetween and said at least one light transmitting element is positioned in said passage, said passage opening at distal and proximal ends of said pair of wall members and said pair of wall members extend between opposite lateral edges of said pair of wall members, said pair of wall members being coupled to one another along said opposite lateral edges.

Claim 59 (Cancelled)